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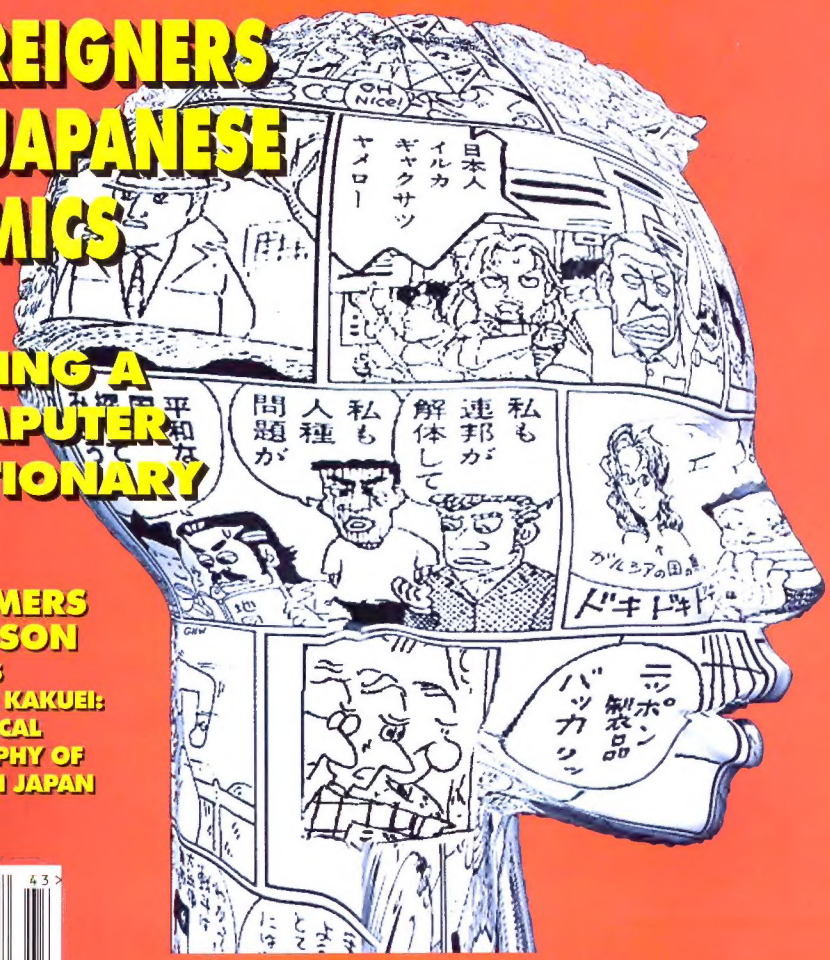

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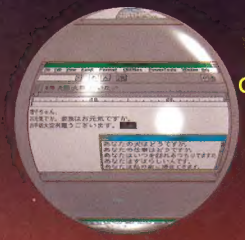

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MANGAJIN
No. 43, March 1995

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Mangajin is a made-up word combining *manga* ("comics/cartoons") and *jin* ("person/people"). It sounds almost like the English word "magazine" as rendered in Japanese—*magajin*. All of the Japanese manga in *Mangajin* were created in Japan, by Japanese cartoonists, for Japanese readers.

漫画人
MANGAJIN

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Publisher's Note

"Isn't Japanese an incredibly difficult language?" It's a question those of us in the Japanese language-learning business hear constantly. I usually reply that some aspects of Japanese are relatively easy (pronunciation and grammar, for example, are straightforward), but the politeness levels found in Japanese can be a real challenge for non-native speakers. (If it's any comfort, Japanese people, especially the younger generation, find them daunting too.) Unfortunately, using the correct politeness level is as important as it is difficult: if your grammar or pronunciation is really bad, you may not be understood, but if you misuse politeness levels, you run the risk of evoking a gut-level negative reaction, even when the listener realizes that you're just trying to learn. This is why *Mangajin* uses a system of politeness level markers to label every sentence. (See our "*Mangajin* Guide" on page 39.)

Still, to get a real handle on politeness levels, you need to see them used in a variety of situations, and that's where *Mangajin* really can be of help. Manga stories provide the cultural context to put politeness levels in proper perspective, and even within a single issue of *Mangajin* you get to see a cross-section of different uses.

A few weeks ago, Wayne Lammers, our Translation Editor, suggested that we include a "Translator's Note" in *Mangajin* so that he could explain some of the linguistic content in each issue that readers might not notice on their own. As we were working on the feature manga for this issue, *Hira Namijirō*, Wayne pointed out that it provides some excellent examples of politeness level usage, and suggested it as a good subject for the first "Translator's Note." So, on page 92 of this issue, Wayne explains how politeness levels function within the corporate hierarchy, and how they can even be used as an integral part of a story line. We hope this new column will help you get even more value from each issue of *Mangajin*.

Vaughan P. Simmons

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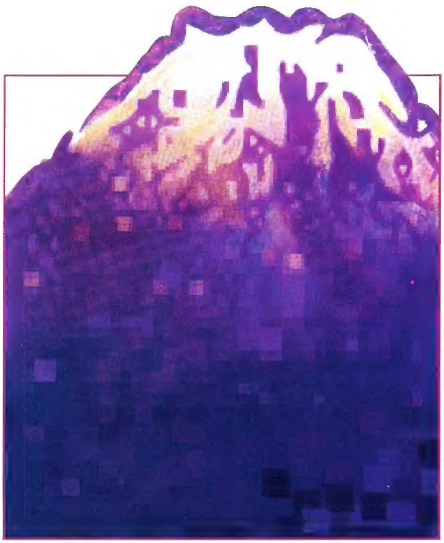

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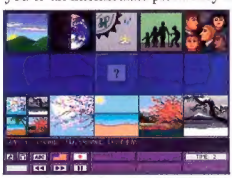

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Japanese TV

Please do a feature on Japanese TV! Here in the NYC area, Fuji TV airs a two-hour block from 7 AM to 9 AM. I would love to know so much more about how Japanese TV in general is structured and about some of the notable TV series writers.
MICHAEL CANUEL
Hoboken, NJ

We take a look at Japanese television from time to time—issue No. 15's "What's Hot on Japanese TV," and No. 33's peek at TV dating shows, for example. Next up is an in-depth look at the wild world of late-night programming. You will find it in issue No. 45, due out in early May of this year.

Manga in English

I got the latest issue of *Mangajin* (No. 41) and wanted to add to your comments on page 4. While it is true that the market for manga translations in the US is centered on science fiction, there have been a surprising number of translations of comics from other genres. For example, Viz has published such books as *Hotel Harbor View* ("hard-boiled" crime fiction) and the excellent series *Sanctuary*, which covers everything from yakuza power struggles to international politics.

My own company, Studio Proteus, has released such series as *Lost Continent*, a fantasy adventure, *Oh My Goddess!*, a romantic comedy, and *Rebel Sword*, the story of a young man who travels to Turkey in search of his father and who gets caught up in the Kurdish struggle for freedom.

The reason that both Viz and Studio Proteus don't publish more non-SF manga is simply because they do not sell well. However, we continue to try, and the market seems to be opening up a bit to this sort of material. In the meantime, we try to pick SF manga that are of high quality, both in art and story. Good SF deals with the human condition as rewardingly as any other genre.

Here's the Dark Horse Comics number for your readers: 1-800-862-0052. Call between 1 PM and 4 PM Pacific time to obtain a complete list of Studio Proteus manga available by mail order.
TOREN SMITH
Studio Proteus
San Francisco, CA

Computer kanji lookup

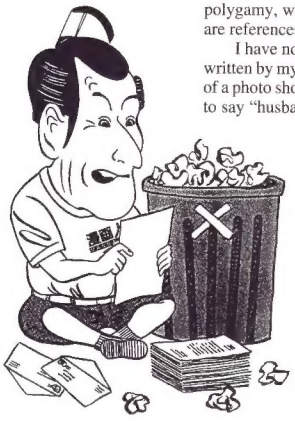
I read, almost a year ago I think, that Sharp was preparing a card for the Expert Pad (like Apple's Newton), a kanji dictionary. You write the kanji on the screen and it recognizes it (if you did it right!), tells you what it means, and gets you into the dictionary. Do you know anything about this? Sure beats counting strokes and figuring radicals!
ANDY JONES
San Mateo, CA

The product you are thinking of is Sharp's Zaurus Electronic Notebook. We are planning a full review of this product in a future issue of Mangajin, *but in the meantime you can contact its US distributor for more information (that's GITCO, at 1-800-JAPAN-07).*

Using *Mangajin*

A little over two years ago, I discovered *Mangajin*. I remember it always took at least three days to work through an issue, but now I'm able to read through in no more than a few hours, since I can skip most of the notes. And with my minimal degree of fluency, I'm motivated to re-read some or all of the manga, for reinforcement or to grasp some points I wasn't able to before. I go back to old issues, and always get more out of them. I also find it valuable to start with the English and come up with the Japanese.
GREG CORMIER
Saint John, NB

Polygamy problems



I am from Pakistan, and since many people are not familiar with Pakistan, I usually have to explain that we are the neighbours of India. I am also constantly answering questions about polygamy, which is permitted under Muslim religion. Also, in the Hindu scriptures, there are references to Draupadi, who had five husbands at the same time.

I have not been in Japan for long, so my vocabulary is restricted. I usually carry notes written by my Japanese husband to shopkeepers explaining what I need. Once the attendant of a photo shop, after reading the note, made a reference to *go-shujin* (御主人, a polite way to say "husband"), to which I gave an alarmed and fervent denial. You see I thought that she thought I had five (五, *go*) husbands (主人, *shujin*). To prove my point, as soon as my husband returned home I took him to the photo shop and said, "*Ichi shujin desu!*" ("One husband!")

TAKAKO SHAHEEN KATO
Osaka

No bag, please

In Japan there is a lot of waste created in the wrapping and bagging of everything. One day in Nagasaki, as the clerk hurried to get to the next customer and was about to hand me a bag, I said, "*Ofuro ga irimasen.*" She looked at me as if I were a gaijin or something and then I realized that I had said "bath" (*ofuro*) instead of "bag" (*ofukuro*)—"I don't need a bath." I'll be sure to keep them straight next time or I may get booted out of the country for not bathing (a *real* crime in Japan)!

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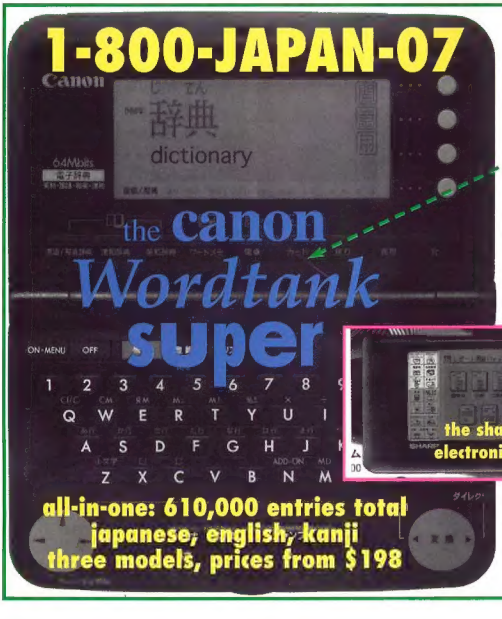

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乾度良好洗えるBATHMAT
Kando Ryōkō Araeru Bathmat
The Washable Bathmat with Excellent Drying Effect

Ara! fushigi!? (あらっ不思議, "Oh! How wonderful!"), exclaims the woman whose just-showered legs appear in this ad. She is apparently marveling at the absorptive powers of the *Kando Ryōkō Araeru Bathmat*, or the "Washable Bathmat with Excellent Drying Effect."

When written with the kanji 感度 (*kando*, "sensitivity") and 良好 (*ryōkō*, "good/fine/excellent"), *kando ryōkō* is an idiomatic expression that means "excellent reception" (as in "This radio gets excellent reception"). In the ad, the 感 (*kan*,"feeling") in 感度 (lit., "degree of feeling/sensing") is replaced with 乾 (*kan*, "dry"). Thus, the copywriters coin a new word: 乾度 or "degree of dryness." Together with 良好, it makes "excellent drying effect."

The ad further proclaims *satto kyūsui, karatto kaisoku* (サッと吸水、カラッと快足), which means something like "immediate absorption; a crisp, dry feeling on the feet." *Kaisoku*, or "fleet-footedness," is not generally heard outside the context of horses (*kaisoku no uma* = "a fast horse"). Here, the copywriters were probably aiming for a more literal reading of the component characters: 快 (*kai*, "comfortable") and 足 (*soku*, "foot").

あの手この手
Ano Te Kono Te
Every Which Hand

The *Ano Te Kono Te* massager understands that not every ache and pain is the same. Each finger has a full range of motion, so the hand can be manipulated to grasp a neck, dig into a shoulderblade, squeeze a toe, or do whatever you need to work out your particular kinks.

Ano te kono te is a familiar expression used when trying all sorts of ways to solve a problem (e.g., *Ano te kono te o tsukushita kedo, dame deshita*, "I tried everything, but nothing worked"). The joke is in the literal translation of *ano te kono te*—"that hand this hand" —since in this case you are actually trying "this hand" and "that hand" to relieve a sore muscle.

Send us your examples of creative product names or slogans (with some kind of documentation). If we publish your example, we'll send you a MANGAJIN T-shirt to wear on your next shopping trip. In case of duplicate entries, earliest postmark gets the shirt. BRAND NEWS, P.O. Box 7119, Marietta, GA 30065

POLITICAL CARTOON

From the Asahi Shinbun (朝日新聞)

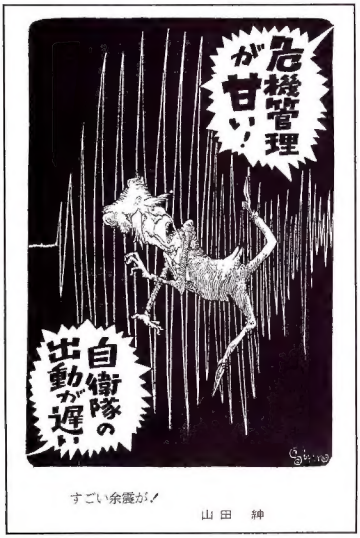
再建支援はつっかい棒程度でっか？
山田　紳

Caption:
再建　　支援　　は つっかい棒 程度でっか？
Saiken　*shien*　*wa*　*tsukkaibō*　*teido*　*dekka*
rebuilding aid/assistance as-for prop/support level is it?
So the reconstruction aid is no more than a makeshift prop?

(Artist) 山田　紳
Yamada Shin

- *tsukkaibō* is a strut or support, but it is often used metaphorically to refer to a temporary or makeshift measure to deal with a situation, similar to the English notion of a "band-aid solution."
- *dekka* is a Kansai dialect contraction of *desu ka.*

These cartoons from January 21st (above) and 22nd both refer to the devastating earthquake that hit the city of Kobe on the 17th. In addition to all the other problems Prime Minister Murayama's administration has been facing, it now must cope with accusations of a belated and inadequate response to the disaster. Reports of mass confusion among the various government offices in the wake of the catastrophe do little to bolster Murayama's waning credibility. Indeed, we can surmise that the top cartoon, featuring a beleaguered Murayama as a yen sign trying to hold up a crumbling building, refers not just to his attempts to deal with the Kobe crisis (and the impact it will have on the Japanese economy), but also to his desperate efforts to hold his deteriorating administration together. The most recent affront to his leadership comes from Yamahana Sadao, who has been threatening to leave Murayama's Social Democratic Party and take twenty-four other members with him.



すごい余震が！
山田　紳

Shouts From Above:
危機　　管理　　が　甘い！
Kiki　*kanri*　*ga*　*amai!*
emergency/crisis management (subj.) lax/inadequate
Your disaster response is inadequate!

Shouts From Below:
自衛隊　　の　　出勤　　が　遅い
Jieitai　*no*　*shutsudō*　*ga*　*osoi*
Self-Defense Forces of dispatch/taking to field (subj.) late/slow
The Self-Defense forces were sent out too late.
You were too slow in sending out the Self-Defense Forces!

Caption:
すごい　余震　が！
Sugoi　*yoshin*　*ga!*
incredible aftershocks (subj.)
Powerful aftershocks!

(Artist) 山田　紳
Yamada Shin

- the literal meaning of *amai* is "sweet," but in various contexts it can mean indulgent, mild, weak, lax, easygoing, etc.
- *sugoi yoshin ga* is an unfinished sentence. A verb such as *okotte-iru* ("are occurring") or *tsuzuite-ire* ("are continuing") is implied after *ga*.

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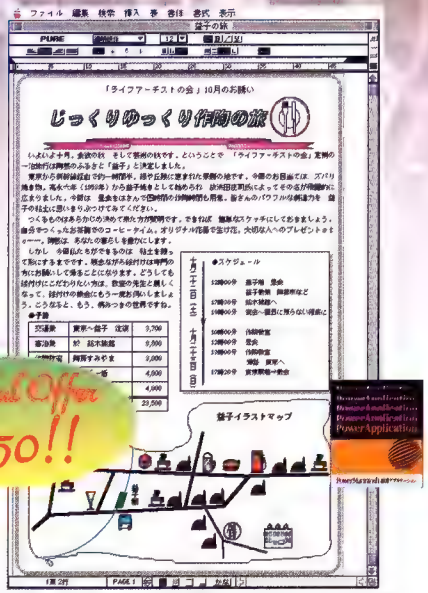

Above: EGWord 6.0 document opened with EGWord Pure, displaying compatibility.

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LaserWriter™ Select 610 is the ideal laser printer for high quality Japanese printing (日本語印刷) at the most affordable price. The LaserWriter™ Select 610 contains ten Kanji fonts (漢字フォント), including two Kanji Postscript™ fonts (Sai-mincho: 細明朝体, Chu-Gothic: 中ゴシック体), and ten Kanji Truetype™ fonts (including Tohaba fonts: 等幅フォント). Since these fonts are built-in, the bit-map creation process is shortened at printing time, making Kanji printing much faster. Another significant feature of this printer is its high quality. Its 600-dpi resolution creates crisp text and graphics with no jaggies, resulting in smooth curves. Furthermore, the LaserWriter Select 610 uses a RISC-processor, enabling 10-ppm high speed printing. This is a must for large document processing! Background printing permits application usage while documents are being processed. The built-in AppleTalk™ interface allows multiple users to share this high-resolution, high quality printer, for up to 31 Macintosh computers. The LaserWriter Select 610 comes with 12MBs of RAM, and it also comes with two paper trays: a manual tray, and a multiple purpose tray, allowing even such diverse usage as postcard feeding.

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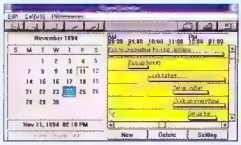

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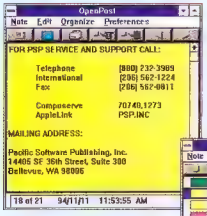

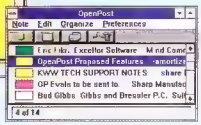

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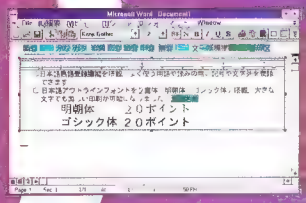

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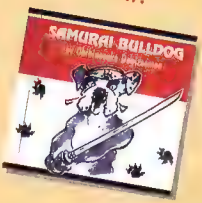

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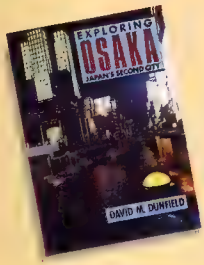

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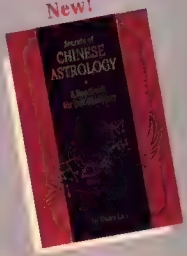

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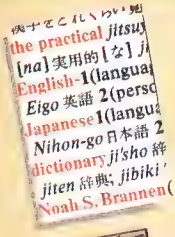

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Gaijin in Manga

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Chairman Icepokka (a pun on Iacocca) comes to Japan to try to sell his wares to Director Hira Namijiro.

My Japanese mother-in-law sometimes calls foreigners achira no hito (あちらの人), *or "people from over there," but the most common term for them in Japan is* gaijin (外人), *or "outsiders." In real life and in manga, the average Japanese is encountering a greater variety of* gaijin *than ever before.*

by Frederik Schodt

any externally-imposed constraints.

The organized protest movement against racist imagery in manga also tended to overlook the many fine manga works that do speak out against discrimination and social injustice. Japan's "God of Comics," the late Tezuka Osamu, although attacked for occasionally using stereotyped images of cannibal-style African natives for "gags," devoted his life to building bridges between people, and created many stories highly critical of racial and religious discrimination. Satonaka Machiko, in a 1968 girls' comic tale titled *Watashi no Jonii* (私のジョニー, "My Johnny"), attacked racism in America's South. Nakazawa Keiji's famous autobiographical story of the Hiroshima bombing, *Hadashi no Gen* (裸足のげん, "Barefoot Gen"), includes a highly sympathetic portrayal of the plight of one of Japan's most oppressed minorities, its Korean residents.

While artists debate how to depict foreigners, Japanese society itself is undergoing major changes. Japan is still relatively homogeneous (with only around one percent "minorities"), but the last few years have seen a visible increase in foreigners, and a greater variety in their nationalities and occupations. At one time most *gaijin* in Japan were tourists, business people, US military, or English teachers. Now, given the reluctance of effete young Japanese to do hard physical labor, there are increasing numbers of legal and illegal foreign blue-collar workers; it is not unusual to encounter Iranians, Bangladeshis, Brazilians, Vietnamese, or Chinese working in factories, driving trucks, or washing dishes. There is even a surprising amount of intermarriage between Japanese and foreigners, including Filipinos, Thais, and Russians.

© Hirokane Kenshi / *Kacho Shima Kosaku*, Kodansha

Section Chief Shima Kosaku becomes involved in a love triangle with Bob and Eileen during his stay in New York.

• constraints = 拘束／束縛 *kōsoku/sokubaku* • autobiographical = 自伝的な *jidenteki-na* • plight = 苦境 *kukyō* • effete = 上品ぶった *jōhun-butta*

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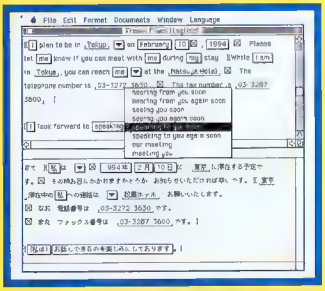
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The mental horizons of young Japanese have been further expanded by travel and real-time television imagery from around the world. Basketball has achieved explosive popularity among young Japanese, and some African American former NBA athletes such as Magic Johnson and Michael Jordan have achieved hero status among Japanese youth. A few years ago, the influential boys' manga monthly *Jump* (ジャンプ) ran a popular series about the LA Lakers; the story was officially authorized by the NBA. In the adult weekly *Comic Morning* (コミックモーニング), Kawaguchi Kaiji's *The Silent Service* (沈黙の艦隊)—an international thriller about a renegade Japanese sub battling the US military—has had very positive depictions of African American officials working in the highest ranks of American government. (The author was undoubtedly influenced by Colin Powell's frequent appearance on television news.)

With more and more Japanese businessmen traveling abroad, there are also more stories set overseas starring Japanese characters. Saitō Takao's long-running *Golgo 13* (ゴルゴ 13) is a pioneer in this respect. Its assassin-hero has been involved in complicated overseas plots heavily dosed with current events ever since 1969. The depictions of foreigners reflect the series' age: whites have big noses and arms that are hairy down to their fingertips, blacks have fat lips, and most foreign women have enormous bosoms and libidos. Even the portrayals of Japanese in this manga from the '60s now look a little "retro."

Other stories reflect more realistic situations, and are more up-to-date in their portrayals. In the mid-80s, the protagonist of the wildly popular and long-running *Kachō Shima Kōsaku* (課長島交錯, "Section Chief Shima Kōsaku") was shown living in New York City as a *tanshin funin* (単身赴任) salaryman—i.e., one who is transferred without his family. The author/artist, Hirokane Kenshi, spent time in New York doing research, and

Japanese-American Robert Ozaki strikes out again in his quest for a job, while his boorish Caucasian friend has an easy time of things in Japan.

© Sam Marlowe and Tsuchida Seiki / *Ihojin, Weekly Comic Morning*

it paid off. Allowing for the inevitable manga hyperbole, gratuitous sex scenes, and cultural errors (such as the illusion that women in American corporations enjoy the same *seiri kyūka* [生理休暇, "menstrual leave"] as their Japanese counterparts), the author did a good job of depicting the ethnic complexity of life in New York, especially for an audience of readers to whom such complexity is both fascinating and frightening.

The bumbling but good-natured foreigner visiting Japan has long been a staple of Japanese manga, but since there are so many more foreign visitors now, the depictions have become much more varied. Maekawa Tsukasa's pathos-filled *Dai Tōkyō Binbō Seikatsu Manyuaru*, mentioned earlier, has a touching episode of the young Japanese hero befriending an impoverished academic (presumably from the Mideast or Eastern Europe) and visiting a public bath with him. In another episode Maekawa depicts a jazz trio of

• renegade = 反逆の／裏切りの *hangyaku no/uragiri no* • dosed with ～ュ…の要素を加えた… *no yōso o kuwaeta* • hyperbole = 誇張 *kochō* • impoverished = 貧しい *mazushii*

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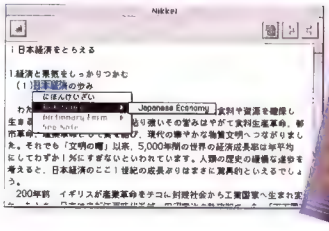

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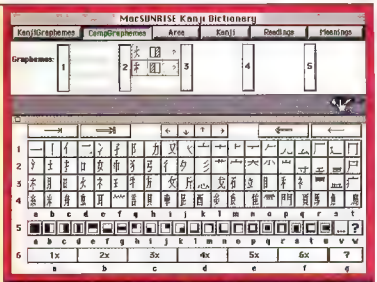

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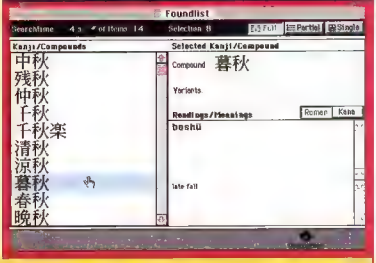

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A "MODERN EMAKIMONO"

Kakuei Tanaka: A Political Biography of Modern Japan

by Steven Hunziker and Ikuro Kamimura

Daruma International, 1994.
$30 ($75 with full-color paintings)
Reviewed by Chalmers Johnson

According to the front matter of this privately published book, "All artwork, paintings, drawings, graphs and charts created by Steven Hunziker. Maps created by Ikuro Kamimura." They do not dwell on who created the text for reasons that will soon become obvious. But the pictures and maps are sensationally good and worth the price of admission.

Hunziker is a satirical artist in the *ukiyo-e* style, not unlike Toyokuni, and he may have been inspired by the contemporary painter Masami Teraoka, whose pictures of samurai snorkeling and licking ice cream cones have attracted a large following. The authors claim to have produced a modern *emakimono* (絵巻物, "illustrated scroll") of the sort that were done a millennium ago. This is nonsense, but they have created a magnificent manga on the same themes that *emaki* artists chose—battles, romances, miraculous events, and the lives of great leaders or religious teachers.

Tanaka Hana with her riches

Their subject is Tanaka Kakuei (1918–1993), who became notorious as the only prime minister in Japanese history to be arrested and convicted of bribery. He came from Niigata prefecture, a backwater on the Japan Sea coast, which he enriched with unprecedented pork barrel projects. Tanaka was a self-made man without a university education, but one who nonetheless became the absolute master of the Japanese parliamentary system. He was hopelessly corrupt, and his name will forever be associated with the Lockheed bribery case and *kinken seiji* (金権政治, "power-of-money politics"), the term which best characterizes the last two decades of rule by the Liberal Democratic Party.

Hunziker has illustrated Tanaka's life with 34 full-color, 8.5" x 11" cartoons. They are simply brilliant. Some of the most stunning are of Tanaka's wife Hana sitting next to a chest of gold coins holding up a banknote; of Tanaka standing astride National Highway 17, which he built and which connects Pacific coast Japan with Niigata; and of Tanaka and Fukuda Takeo fighting with swords and *kendō* sticks while Tanaka's daughter, Makiko (currently a member of the Cabinet), looks on. Fukuda, Tanaka's great ex-bureaucrat rival who personified all the privileges of Japanese society that Tanaka had been denied, wears a *mon* (紋, "crest") of *Tōdai* (東大, short for 東京大学, the University of Tokyo). My personal favorite is of Tanaka going into battle on a motorbike leading the samurai of the *Etsuzankai* (越山会, Tanaka's Niigata machine) packed into rural buses. In the background we see *Echigo Kōtsū* castle, named after Tanaka's lucrative bus, gravel, and real estate company.

Tanaka astride Highway 17

Kamimura's maps are also a real revelation for researchers working on Tanaka's corruption. His map of how National Highway 17 jumps the Uono River in order to go through three hamlets of importance to Tanaka and then jumps back should be included in all texts on Japanese politics, and those of Toyano swamp south of Niigata city and the Shinano riverbed in Nagaoka reveal the essence of these corrupt projects in ways words never have.

Tanaka dueling with Fukuda

The problem is that whereas Hunziker's paintings are satirical, neither he nor his co-author is a satirist. They are Tanaka loyalists, even groupies, determined to overstate his accomplishments and denigrate everyone else

(continued on page 33)

• dwell on – 詳述する／触れる *shōjutsu suru/fureru* • satirical – 風刺的な *fūshiteki na* • snorkel = シュノーケル *shunokeru* • notorious – 悪名高い *akumyō takai* • be arrested – 逮捕される *taiho sareru* • be convicted – 有罪判決を受ける *yuzaihanketsu o ukeru* • bribery = 贈収賄 *zōshūwai* • pork barrel = 選挙民に取り入るために議員が政府に支出させる地方開発金 *senkyomin ni toriiru tame ni giin ga seifu ni shishutsu saseru chiho kaihatsukin* • lucrative = 利得の大きい *rituku no ōkii* • revelation – 意外な新発見 *igai na shin-hakken* • swamp – 湿地／沼地 *shitchi/numachi*

the press of a two-key combination look up various kanji and English meanings. Another key combination inserts either the kanji or the English definition. Users can also highlight Japanese text in existing documents for TSM Passport to define. As far as user interface goes, it doesn't get much slicker than this.

The dictionary claims 65,000 words, but it doesn't take long for experienced Japanese speakers to hit its limits. The words it does recognize, however, are displayed in Japanese next to their English definitions, which simplifies choosing the proper word. This is fortunate, as TSM Passport offers many possible definitions for each word (usually words that happen to begin with the same character or characters). One quirk is that although there are many compound words that the dictionary does not locate when you are searching for the entire word, it usually displays these same words as part of a longer list when you search for only the first character or two. Once you get used to this, the program becomes much easier to use.

TSM Passport allows users to add words in two ways—either a word at a time, or in bulk, using the special DictMaker utility included with the program. For each new word, the user must provide hiragana, kanji, and the English definition. Up to two custom dictionaries of any size may be used at once. This is a very nice feature; the one minor drawback is that in order to change which user dictionaries are used, you must reboot the computer.

But these handy features should not blind potential users to what TSM Passport really is: a Japanese-to-English dictionary. This is not a problem, flaw, or bug —in fact it's wonderful if you happen to be a Japanese speaker, as the dictionary is designed to provide English equivalents for Japanese words. But English speakers be warned: you can't type an English word and expect to get its Japanese counterpart. The program just doesn't work that way.

This does not diminish the dictionary's value. It is a strong utility for Japanese speakers and even for English speaking users, provided they know what they're getting. Non-Japanese users can use TSM Passport in two ways: first, to provide English definitions for text in existing documents (though it does not provide pronunciation information); second, as a beefed-up front-end processor which defines kanji combinations. The latter use alone is probably worth the cost of the program to many English-speaking users.

Product Information:
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Douglas Horn is a computer consultant living in Seattle.

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A Touch of Japan

by Andrew Watson

"Kanazawa in April is quite beautiful with the cherry blossoms and the weather is just right."

(author at left in photo)

Studying Japanese for my own interests (I am an engineer and have no need for Japanese in my job), I decided to take the big step and try out a Eurocentre course in the best place to learn Japanese—in Japan (surprise, surprise).

Looking back at the time I spent in Japan (one month in April and two weeks in July, 1994), I realize now how much I gained from the experience and how it changed me.

Whilst studying Japanese in England for two years prior to my Eurocentre courses, I found it very difficult to find the time to do extra home study or was it that I just could not motivate myself. How my attitude changed after studying in the native country.

The first thing that hits the visitor to Japan is the speed and efficiency of the public transport system especially if you come from England where the public transport leaves a lot to be desired. The only thing that the visitor may find daunting is the station signs in Japanese and the tickets also being unreadable to my limited reading ability, but anyone you ask for assistance will do their utmost to help. I experienced this first hand when asking a lady on the *Shinkansen* (bullet train) if this particular train stopped at a station I was heading for. She did not know but she then walked up the train to some other passengers and asked them. She then returned and told me the answer. Sincerely, wow!

As a tall, gangly foreigner I was not stared at as much as I had read in guide books although you are noticed and in fact upon returning to England I rather missed the glances and attention that people gave you while walking upon the street. In England I am just another face in a crowd.

I was at first rather daunted when I realized that nobody in my host family spoke English, seeing as my Japanese was initially very poor, but I soon discovered that with a dictionary, plenty of sign language and a pen and paper it was possible to discuss anything from your family to the religious procedures of Nichiren Sect Buddhism.

Seriously, though, it is of immense benefit to learning if your family speaks little or no English as you have no other choice but to speak Japanese. My family in fact were of immense help in anything I wanted to do. Every meal was like a feast. My host mother was very conversational and taught me all I needed to know about Japanese family life (and about Nichiren Sect Buddhism). My host mother would also help me if I had trouble with my homework, and I found that just casual conversation was one of the best learning methods (do not expect your host mother to help you—mine was the best one in the world).

The thing about not speaking English also occurred in class. The teachers could speak English but in the cause of education would only speak in Japanese. I hope this does not stir horror in anybody because in fact the teachers are well skilled in teaching and have the most demanded of qualities in a teacher—patience. Most people, me included, were surprised by how much we had learned and understood in a week and gradually Japanese conversation became intelligible. The lessons were very interesting and although the pace was brisk the atmosphere in the class was always relaxed with much humor and nobody was left behind. The teachers ensured this last condition by putting questions to us individually, often recapping on the previous subjects and consistently the homework was always based on what we had learned that day so the new subjects would be firmly planted in my head when it hit the *makura* (pillow).

So that is a load of good things about Japan; but what about the less-than-good things. Well, like me you might be called upon to eat things which you might feel guilty about feeding to your cat, but with adequate amounts of *sake* you could eat your own limbs and still want dessert. On the subject of *sake* I will mention my classmates. The April intake consisted of only about ten students and because of this we all became very close, especially the five of us in my class. Because of this comradeship, a few of us became quite well known in the bars of Kanazawa and I think the teachers noticed a marked deterioration in our energy first thing in the morning (they could not complain about the homework as we

always did this in any of the bars we were in) and my host mother began to forget what I looked like.

Kanazawa in April is quite beautiful with the cherry blossoms and the weather is just right (sorry, but being English I had to mention the weather). For someone who is interested in foreign religions like myself, Kanazawa is a feast for the senses. One never has to walk very far to find a Shinto shrine or a Buddhist temple. My other virtuous interest being getting as drunk as I can in one evening also became well exercised, as Kanazawa contains such a plethora of bars, restaurants and coffee shops that one is hard pushed to decide which one to visit. Accompanying this great choice is also the feeling of safety of walking the streets at night (albeit with slightly more *sake* than blood in your body). Honestly there was never any trouble at all on the streets apart from two occasions. The first occasion was on a Friday night in the town's main square where a crowd had gathered and the police were rushing in. It turned out that somebody slightly worse for drink had just fallen over and this immediately caused the attention of the police. Extreme? The other occasion was when my American friend and myself were standing in a taxi queue and a couple of young guys (as drunk as us) came up to us and doing high fives with us and practicing their English by cheerfully screaming at us. In London one might expect a situation like that to end up in a fight—in Kanazawa they started feeding us octopus balls (I say no more other than that they were quite tasty—the octopus balls, that is, not the Japanese guys). However after saying all this do not blame me if the *yakuza* gangsters get you.

I am sure that people will return to their countries and find their Japanese studying amenities slightly lacking after being spoilt by the excellent amenities of Eurocentre. As well as the four hour lessons in the morning, courses on Japanese culture (e.g. calligraphy, Japanese cooking, origami, and flower arrangement to name but a few), and short excursions, there is a library and study room with computers for studying on and if there is anything else that you want to do the Eurocentre staff will bend over backwards to organize it for you (they may reproach me for making that statement or even pass my name onto the *yakuza*).

Last September, as arranged, I went to Switzerland for a reunion with my April classmates. Since April we have kept in touch and I frequently communicate with the friends I now have in Switzerland, America, Canada, and Kanazawa.

As I mentioned at the beginning about change, well, the time I spent at Eurocentre gave me such a boost in my Japanese that I spend almost every spare minute studying Japanese and I have now received qualifications in it and if all goes to plan, my company may be sending me there to work next year which I would have been unable to do if I had not decided to study at Eurocentre Kanazawa.

To anyone who decides to study at Eurocentre, I wish the best of luck, and hope you see as many bars as I did.

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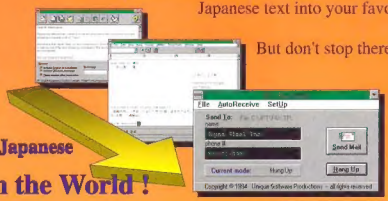

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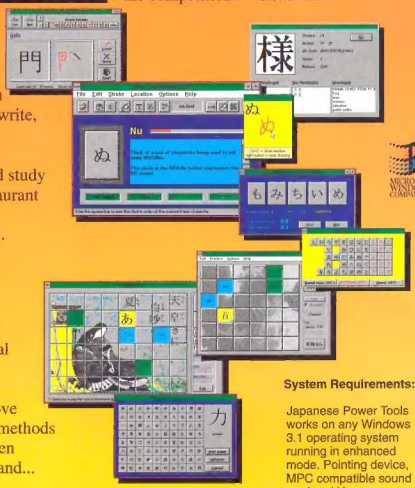

Multimedia support, interactive tests for different levels of learning, and study charts, are just some of the features that will show you how to read restaurant menus, understand Kanji in Japanese newspapers, and write Japanese correspondence. Yet, with all these productive tools, JPT also provides...

Fun...

While JPT uses great tools like ***Kana for Windows*** and ***Kanji Writer!*** for progressive learning, there may be times when you'll just want to sit back and have fun! For this, JPT is also bundled with the two educational games: ***Kana Guess for Windows*** and ***Kanji for Fun!***

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System Requirements:

Japanese Power Tools works on any Windows 3.1 operating system running in enhanced mode. Pointing device, MPC compatible sound card and Hayes compatible modem recommended.

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